God is Our Final Authority

> **Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.**
> **James 4:17 (KJV)**

Imagine you were to come across an accident scene and see that there are injured people trapped in a car. You want to try and help them but there is a policeman behind a roadblock attempting to prevent you from doing so. He is telling you there is nothing that can be done for them, just move along. Would you listen? Or would you go around that roadblock and do the best you could to help?

What kind of thoughts might go through your mind after such an incident? You believe that you could have helped those people, but chose instead to heed that roadblock and you feel terribly guilty about it. But then you think to yourself that a policeman is better qualified to judge such matters than you are.

> **For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.**
> **Romans 11:21-22 (KJV)**

Now let's say you are reading your bible and you come across the above scripture which makes it plain that we may lose our salvation. Your pastor is teaching **eternal security**; telling his congregation that once we are saved we cannot lose our salvation. Like a good Christian you show him this scripture and others you have found, but he tells you that you are not qualified to comprehend the Word of God. Do you heed him, or go around him?

Once again we begin to rationalize the situation; this man is the pastor of a big church, he has spent many years in the seminary, surely he must know better than us, right?

Forced to Heed or Proceed

> **I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.**
> **Jeremiah 17:10 (KJV)**

Here we have a classic moral dilemma that is constantly presented to us; to trust our own conscience or an 'authority figure' be they civil, military or religious. For the Christian the answer is not elusive, because God's Word tells us that He judges us by our hearts and that if we would judge ourselves we would not be judged by Him (**1 Corinthians 11:31 KJV**).

But what if I make the wrong decision? Fair question, but once again since God sees our hearts and that is the

criteria He judges us by we must believe that **the mistakes don't count**. If it is God who is our final authority and He judges us by our conscience we must follow our conscience.

Rationalization – A Mental Roadblock

If we do not have a love of truth rationalization provides us with a convenient excuse to justify our actions, or lack thereof. But if we do value truth we must be willing to go around any roadblock that comes between us and it.

> **For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)**
> **Romans 2:14-15 (KJV)**

Take the example of evolution; although it seems on the surface to be a scientific theory in practical application it amounts to a vehicle for us to rationalize our sin natures. In our minds the education system has set up Charles Darwin as an authority figure, just like that policeman. He theorizes that we are just another species of animal; however the moral ramification is that we are no more morally responsible for our actions as an animal is.

For many, Darwin's theory is a matter of convenience, for it provides us with a certain level of moral ambiguity and wall of separation from our sin natures. Our own conscience tells us that we are responsible for our behavior, but we choose to ignore it. If we do this often enough we will actually damage it (**1 Timothy 4:1-2 KJV**).

We live in a society where any type of self control is portrayed as trying to inhibit 'free expression'. We are told we have no control over whether to act on emotions or so called 'primal urges'. What is never understood is that every urge originates from the same place within us; even rape, sodomy or murder.

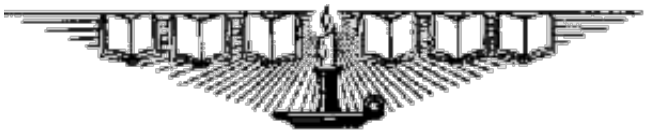
> **For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.**
> **James 2:10-11 (KJV)**

But before we get all judgmental against those who commit criminal offenses we also must to understand that things like jealousy, lying and stealing come from that same dark place within all of us as rape and murder. So for the sincere follower of Christ it isn't about being better than others, but the simple revelation that we are all cut from the same dirty cloth. Yes, we are all 'born this way', that is, we are born sinners. Although we have limited control over what life gives us we have complete control over how we respond to them.

> **A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**
> **Matthew 7:18-20 (KJV)**

Some Christians get stuck on the fact that **we are all sinners** and take it to mean that we should not hold ourselves accountable or judge others based on their actions. But whether we acknowledge it or not this thinking

provides a rationalization for sin and has no rightful place in the mind of the Christian. As the wise saying goes, actions speak louder than words. We are commanded to judge with righteous judgment (**John 7:24 KJV**) and to know others by their fruits.

Other scriptures to consider:

1 Corinthians 9:27 (KJV)
1 Samuel 15:23 (KJV)